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Auth: J. ETO.
Initials J. ETO.
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VETERINARY SERVICES IN THE WEHRKREIS

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1. Veterinary Services in the Wehrkreiskommando are centered in the Veterinary Section, which is known as Abteilung IV c. This Section is headed by the Korpsveterinär or Corps Veterinary Surgeon. Ultimate authority in veterinary matters is wielded by the Veterinärinspektion or Veterinary Inspectorate of the OKH, commonly listed as the OKH/AMA (V.In.). Administrative assistance in managing certain veterinary installations is furnished by certain Sachgebiete or sections of the Wehrkreisverwaltung or administrative headquarters of the Wehrkreis. The presence or absence of such dual responsibility is indicated in the description of each installation.

2. The German Veterinary Service appears to be concerned principally with equine problems. Little or no reference is made to the handling of diseases of other animals. There is apparently some responsibility in the matter of use of foods of animal origin but there is no indication of other duties in regard to food supply of the German Army. It is probable, however, that inspection of meat and other foods is a routine part of any Veterinary Headquarters.

3. The duties of the Korpsveterinär are not clearly defined in available directives nor is there any indication as to the size or composition of his staff. The veterinary units in the Wehrkreis, which are under the control of the Korpsveterinär are as follows:

a. Wehrkreisveterinäruntersuchungsstellen -- Wehrkreis Veterinary Research Center.

(1) These units are organized on a company status on the basis of one per Wehrkreis although not all have been identified. Within the Wehrkreis, control is maintained by Abteilung IV c. Veterinary Research may be controlled by the Wehrkreisveterinäruntersuchungsamt, or Army Wehrkreis Research Office to which all veterinary hospital records are eventually sent. The Korpsveterinär Akademie or Army Veterinary Academy also may assist in the integration of veterinary research within the Wehrkreis.

(2) The Wehrkreisveterinäruntersuchungsstellen are responsible for issuing instructions with reference to the preparation of animal foods for human consumption as well as for the performance of laboratory tests in connection with animal diseases.

b. Heimat- und Wehrkreisveterinärparko. Home and Wehrkreis Veterinary Depots.

(1) These units or depots are organized on a battalion status under the control of Wehrkreiskommando Abteilung IV c. They are subordinated to Sachgebiet 4 of the Wehrkreisverwaltung for administrative matters. One of each of these depots may be assumed to exist in all Wehrkreise although not all have been identified. The Heimatsveterinärparko is designated by the Arabic numeral corresponding to the number of the Wehrkreis in which it is located while the Wehrkreisveterinärparko uses the Roman numeral of the Wehrkreis.

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(2) The Heimatveterinärparko holds all type of veterinary equipment, most of which is delivered direct from factories by order of OKH/AHA (V.In.) or veterinary inspectorate. Heimatveterinärparko deliver equipment direct to units and to Veterinärdienststellen or Veterinary Headquarters on receipt of direct requisition. It is believed that the functions of the Wehrkreisveterinärparko are approximately the same.

(3) The Hauptveterinärparko or Central Veterinary Depot is controlled directly by the OKH/AHA (V.In.) and is of regimental status. Its functions are approximately the same as those of the depots in the Wehrkreis.

c. Pferdelazarette or Horse Hospitals are immediately controlled by Wehrkreiskommando Abteilung IV c, while administrative matters are handled by Sachgebiet A of the Wehrkreisverwaltung. Three types of Horse Hospitals have been mentioned.

(1) Heimatpferdelazarette or Home Horse Hospitals. These are of regimental status and there may be an indefinite number in each Wehrkreis. They are designated by the Arabic number of the Wehrkreis either used alone or with the addition of one or more hundreds, e.g., in Wehrkreis XII, five Heimatpferdelazarette have been identified, designated as numbers 12, 212, 312, 412 and 512. These hospitals using the Arabic number alone, e.g., No. 12, are designated as surgical hospitals; while those with the Arabic number plus 100 e.g., No. 108, are designated as contagious disease hospitals. The significance of the other numbers is not known. Heimatpferdelazarette ordinarily have a capacity of approximately 1000 horses. The staff consists of an unknown number of veterinary officers assisted by 64 non-commissioned officers and 498 enlisted men.

(2) Wehrkreisferdelazarette or Wehrkreis Horse Hospitals. These are of battalion status and there is probably only one per Wehrkreis. They are designated by the Roman numeral. Composition and function of the Wehrkreisferdelazarette are not known.

(3) Übungspferdelazarett or Exercise Horse Hospital. Other than the name, no information is available concerning this type of veterinary institution.

d. Heeres-Rekonto-Mitar or Army Remount Depots.

(1) These units are organized on a Wehrkreis basis but are controlled at least in part at higher levels. For certain functions within the Wehrkreis, the Heeres-Rekonto-Mitar are responsible to Abteilung IV c but ultimate control appears to be in the hands of the Inspektion des Reit und Fahrwesens, or Inspectorate of Riding and Horse Transportation, or OKH/AHA (In. 3). This latter headquarters has direct control over the following:

- (a) Stocking of depots with horses, mustering of horses and issuing stock to units.
- (b) Acquisition and maintenance of depot property.
- (c) Allocation of funds. All correspondence concerning Heeres-Rekonto-Mitar must go through Wehrkreis headquarters. The OKH/AHA (In. 3) issues directives concerning the operation of depots and maintains the right of inspection at any time.

(2) The Remount Depots are responsible for the maintenance and stabling of all horses bought by the army and for their transportation to their ultimate destination either in the Wehrkreis or the field army. Horses may be delivered directly to units at home or to a Wehrkreis Reit und Fahrschule or Wehrkreis Riding and Driving School. For delivery to field army units, horses are sent by way of a Heimatpferdeparko-(see below).

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(3) Heeres-Remonte-Lager are presumably of regimental status and are commanded either by a Colonel or Lt. Colonel. The exact composition of the staff is not known but included in it are agricultural experts, veterinary officers and civilian veterinary surgeons.

e. Heimatpferdepark or Home Horse Depots. These are depots to which horses are delivered by the Heeres-Remonte-Lager for eventual delivery to the field army. They are usually designated by the Arabic numeral corresponding to the Wehrkreis in which it is located and there is usually but one per Wehrkreis. Furnishing of horses from the Heimatpferdepark to army units is stated to be regulated by the OKH/AMA (V.Ins.). Therefore, Heimatpferdepark probably are under the direct supervision of Wehrkreiskommando Abteilung IV c. It is not clear whether the responsibility of OKH/AMA (In. 3) in distributing horses to units extends this far, or whether dual control is exerted over the Heimatpferdepark.

f. Standortveterinär or Garrison Veterinary Officer. The Standortveterinär and his staff form Abteilung IV c of the Staff of the Wehrmacht Kommandantur. The duties and responsibilities of the Garrison Veterinary Officer are not stated.

g. Additional veterinary units which have been identified.

(1) Pferdesammelstellen -- Horse Collecting Points. Only one has been identified and is thought to be a horse evacuation station. If it is analogous to the Krankensammelstellen of the Medical Service, it is probable that this is a GHQ unit rather than a Wehrkreis unit.

(2) Pferde Erholungs Kommando -- Horse Convalescent Units. These are presumed to be under Wehrkreis control but nothing is known of their function.

4. Additional information on the Veterinary Service is expected, and will be published when available.

For the Chief Surgeon:

William A. Howard
WILLIAM A. HOWARD
Lt. Col., Medical Corps
Chief, Medical Intelligence Branch
Operations Division

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